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ODP-81-473

7 May 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration

VIA : Information Handling Systems Architect *als*FROM : Bruce T. Johnson
Director of Data Processing

SUBJECT : Computer Program Development in CIA

1. This memorandum reports the results of our survey of computer software development resources and discusses decentralized versus centralized approaches as to the development of computer programs in CIA. Development of computer programs, as used in this paper, includes maintenance and enhancement (value added) of programs.

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2. In April 1981, in response to your inquiry, ODP and the Information Handling Systems Architect conducted a survey of Agency resources devoted to computer program development. The survey included a) the number of staff employees whose primary duties relate to computer program development in FY 1981, b) the number of contractor personnel with the same function in FY 1981, and c) the FY 1981 funds allocated for software development, maintenance, and enhancement (value added programming). The following table summarizes the data gathered during the survey.

<u>Staff</u>	<u>Contractors</u>	<u>81 Funds (\$K)</u>

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*Excludes Special Projects Staff/ODP, and Consolidated SAFE Project Office. Includes MERCURY and 4C funds.

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3. The ODP numbers included in the DDA numbers for the three columns above are [redacted] respectively. These numbers do not include the ODP personnel who are on rotational assignment to other components of the Agency or Intelligence Community and are occupying positions on their Position Control Registers; such persons are included in the component's numbers. [redacted]

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4. If we assume that ODP computer program development is the Agency's centralized service and the remainder is decentralized computer program development, then the percentages of centralized versus decentralized resources are reflected in the following table.

Centralized Computer Program Development

	<u>% Staff</u>	<u>% Contractor</u>	<u>% 81 Funds</u>
ODP	31	37	41

Decentralized Computer Program Development

	<u>% Staff</u>	<u>% Contractor</u>	<u>% 81 Funds</u>
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*Excludes ODP Resources


If averaging the percentages in the three columns makes sense, then 36% of the program development resources are centralized ($(31+37+41)/3$) and 64% of the resources are decentralized.

5. Information about the degree to which the Agency's computer program development resources are decentralized leads inevitably to questions about whether a greater degree of efficiency could be obtained if they were centralized under a single management. This question has come up periodically ever since the Agency began using computers, and it was one of the questions which the Information Handling Task Force was expected to address. [redacted]


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6. The most dramatic of the options developed by the Task Force would have created a Directorate of Information Services, encompassing all information handling activities, including all planning, career management, budgeting, and operational control, including tasking. The Executive Committee debate about this option and variations of it was vigorous and the result was a complete rejection of any proposals which would reduce the responsiveness of the information handling resources available to the line manager. Instead, the EXCOM elected to establish a new mechanism, the Information Handling Systems Architect, to coordinate the decentralized work to the extent necessary to ensure that someone would be in a position to channel component efforts away from purely local considerations and into paths consistent with larger, systems architectural concerns. In this manner the senior managers specifically protected the control of component managers over their information handling activities, including software development, and did so in the interest of greater responsiveness. 

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7. Proposals to reopen the question of centralized versus decentralized ADP development at this time would almost certainly be challenged on the grounds that we have not given the new Architect and his staff the opportunity to function as monitors and coordinators of decentralized activities. Until we have some experience under this new coordinating mechanism, it does not seem advisable to raise anew the thorny question of increased centralization. 

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Bruce T. Johnson

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